

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended): A process for the production of a particulate detergent or detergent premix component comprising the steps of ~~providing a flowable acidic component, providing~~ coating a particle comprising an ~~alkaline detergent ingredient selected from the group consisting of alkali metal silicates, alkali metal aluminosilicates, alkali metal perborates, one or more alkali metal percarbonates, and mixtures thereof, and applying the~~ with a flowable acidic component consisting of stearic acid, ~~to the particle, to form a particulate detergent or detergent premix component consisting essentially of particles wherein the amount of acidic component applied to the particle is governed by the formula $m_c/(m_c + m_p) = c \cdot 1/r$, where m_c is the weight of the acidic component applied, m_p is the weight of the particle, r is the radius of the particle in μm , and c is a factor of~~ [[5]] 0.5 length units to [[10]] 20 length units, ~~and wherein the acidic component comprises one or more acids selected from the group consisting of mono- or dicarboxylic acids containing 10 to 22 carbon atoms, sulfuric acid monoalk(en)yl esters containing 10 to 20 carbon atoms, alk(en)yl or alkylaryl sulfonic acids containing 10 to 20 carbon atoms, and polymeric polycarboxylic acids obtainable~~

~~by polymerization of ethylenically unsaturated mono- and/or dicarboxylic acids.~~

11. (original): The process of claim 10, wherein the particle has a radius r of 100 μm to 1,000 μm .

12. (original): The process of claim 10, wherein c is a factor of 5 length units to 10 length units.

13. (canceled)

14. (original): The process of claim 10, wherein the flowable acidic component is solid at room temperature and is applied to the particle in a flowable form at a process temperature above room temperature.

15. (original): The process of claim 10, wherein the acidic component is applied to the particle over a period of 5 minutes to 20 minutes.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended): A method of preparing a detergent composition comprising the steps of providing a flowable acidic component consisting of stearic acid, providing a particle comprising one or more ~~an alkaline detergent ingredient selected from the group consisting of~~

~~alkali metal silicates, alkali metal aluminosilicates,~~
~~alkali metal perborates, and mixtures thereof~~ carbonates,
and applying the flowable acidic component to the particle,
to form a particulate detergent or detergent premix
component ~~consisting essentially of~~ particles wherein the
amount of acidic component applied to the particle is
governed by the formula $m_c/(m_c + m_p) = c \cdot 1/r$, where m_c is
the weight of the acidic component applied, m_p is the weight
of the particle, r is the radius of the particle in μm , and
 c is a factor of ~~[[5]]~~ 0.5 length units to ~~[[10]]~~ 20 length
units, and mixing the particulate detergent or detergent
premix component with at least one other particulate
component to form the detergent composition.

19. (original): The method of claim 18, wherein the at
least one other particulate component comprises at least
one active ingredient of which the washing or cleaning
effect is greater at a lower pH value than that established
after dissolution of the alkaline detergent ingredient of
the particulate premix than it is at the pH value
established during dissolution of the said particulate
premix.